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Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Committee

Draft report

Contents

Page

I. Matters calling for action by the Committee or brought to its attention 2
A. Recommendations 2
B. Decisions 2
II. Proceedings 2
A. Review of social development trends and challenges in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015 2
B. Consideration of a thematic focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women 4
C. Consideration of the programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017 22
D. Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-first session 23
E. Other matters 23
F. Adoption of the report of the Committee 23
III. Organization 23
A. Opening, duration and organization of the session 23
B. Attendance 23
C. Election of officers 24
D. Agenda 24
E. Side event 25
Annex: List of documents 26

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I. Matters calling for action by the Committee or brought to its attention

A. Recommendations

Draft outcome document of the "Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review" (17-20 November 2014)

1. The Committee requested the secretariat to revise, as appropriate, the draft outcome document in relation to suggestions made by delegations, as contained in section IIB(b) of the present draft report.

B. Decisions

Adoption of the report

2. On 20 August 2014, the Committee on Social Development adopted the report on its third session for submission to the Commission at its seventy-first session.

Date of the fourth session of the Committee

3. The Committee decided that its fourth session would be held in the last quarter of 2016.

Programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017

4. The Committee endorsed the programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017, as contained in E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/3.

II. Proceedings

A. Review of social development trends and challenges in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015

1. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Confronting rising inequalities in Asia and the Pacific: trends and opportunities in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015" (E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/1).

2. Representatives of the following ESCAP members made statements: Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; Fiji; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Pakistan; Philippines; Russian Federation; and Thailand.

3. The Committee's attention was drawn to the following main trends and findings: (a) inequality persists in Asia and the Pacific, and in some instances has intensified; (b) inequality takes many forms and pathways; and (c) inequalities reinforce each other creating an "inequality trap" that disproportionately affects women and the most vulnerable, including persons with disabilities and migrants.

4. The Committee commended the secretariat on the selection of the timely theme for its third session of rising inequalities, noting in particular that gender inequality needed to be urgently addressed if the region was to be successful in integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

5. The Committee expressed appreciation for the high quality of the documentation submitted, which captured prevailing inequality trends in the region and framed the mutually reinforcing pathways and forms of inequality in three dimensions: economic inequality; inequality in well-being; and inequalities across key population groups.

6. The Committee took note of the significant progress made by ESCAP members and associate members towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and addressing economic and social inequalities in the region. While recognizing that progress, the Committee noted that there was an "unfinished agenda", particularly in relation to ensuring poverty reduction, gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

7. In acknowledging the importance of the development agenda beyond 2015 and, in particular, welcoming the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals for stand-alone goals on inequality and gender equality, several delegations noted that the development agenda beyond 2015 must include robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The Committee also noted the challenges of articulating concise goals, measurable targets and means of implementation.

8. The Committee acknowledged that income inequality constituted an important driver of poverty and an impediment to socioeconomic mobility. For that reason, several countries had introduced cash transfer schemes, minimum wage legislation and other forms of income security, as well as facilitating access to microcredit and strengthening labour market policies.

9. Many delegations underscored the importance of more inclusive development processes that included ensuring universal access to affordable health services, as well as the provision of basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation. Several delegations stressed that policies and initiatives to reduce poverty and to eliminate social disparities should address horizontal inequalities by focusing on the needs of key population groups, including women, girls, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and migrants.

10. The Committee noted the progress achieved in primary and secondary school enrolment and completion rates, particularly for girls. The Committee also noted the central role of education in combating discrimination and gender stereotypes. The Committee noted with concern the prevalence of early and child marriage, as well as of adolescent pregnancy, and the consequent intergenerational impacts.

11. In noting that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action had been instrumental in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, the Committee attached high importance to its full and effective implementation in the region.

12. Several delegations reported on their efforts to mainstream gender issues into national policies and programmes, including through capacity-building and allocation of adequate resources. The importance of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for informed policymaking was also highlighted.

13. The Committee was further informed of key legal reforms and policies that had supported the enhancement of women's political participation and representation at national and local levels. Some delegations noted that gender quotas and targets had proven effective in encouraging greater representation of women in decision-making positions.

14. The Committee noted with appreciation the efforts that had been made by several countries to enhance women's economic participation. Those efforts included the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, facilitation of access to credit, introduction of innovative financial products and provision of training opportunities, as well as targeted employment programmes. Several delegations emphasized the need to strengthen support for women in realization of their career and family aspirations, including measures to promote work-life balance.

15. The Committee underscored the need to end violence against women and children across the region. Several delegations reported on their legislative frameworks, policies and programmes that sought to protect women and children from all forms of violence, including domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment in the workplace and other contexts. For that purpose, the Committee noted that crisis centres for women who had experienced violence had been established in several countries. The Committee also noted that a range of laws and policies had been adopted to protect women and children from human trafficking, including for sexual purposes.

16. In reference to Security Council resolution 1325, the Committee noted the critical role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, particularly through their leadership and active engagement in peacebuilding processes.

17. In noting that Asia and the Pacific was the most disaster-prone region in the world, the Committee highlighted the increasing vulnerability of particular populations, including the poor, older persons and persons with disabilities, to natural disasters. The impact of climate change was also noted as a potential threat to the achievement of sustainable development.

18. The Committee recognized that reducing inequality in all its forms, particularly addressing the social exclusion of women and girls, would require strategic and gender-responsive investments, including through innovative partnerships. In that respect, the Committee noted the importance of enhancing social protection, promoting productive and decent work, strengthening redistributive taxation systems and increasing data collection to support evidence-based policymaking, as means of addressing inequalities in the region.

19. The consolidated statement made by civil society highlighted the range of challenges faced by women and girls in the region, including the pervasive and entrenched inequalities in wealth, capital and natural resources. The representative of civil society expressed support for investment in redistributive policies and a focus on decent work. The representative further requested Governments to commit to reforming the international trade, finance and taxation architecture in support of sustainable development. In the process of defining the development agenda beyond 2015, civil society applauded the proposed inclusion of a stand-alone goal on gender equality and called for the establishment of more effective accountability mechanisms at the international, regional and national levels.

B. Consideration of a thematic focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women

(a) Review of regional preparations for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review (Bangkok, 17-20 November 2014)

20. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Asia-Pacific road map for the 20-year review of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" (E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/2).

21. In providing an overview of the global preparatory process for the 20-year review of progress in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+20), the Executive Secretary of the Commission of the Status of Women informed the Committee that the Beijing+20 review process included national-level reviews, regional intergovernmental review meetings and a communication and social mobilization campaign. The Beijing+20 review process would culminate in a global review during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held from 9 to 20 March 2015. The Executive Secretary of the Commission on the Status of Women further highlighted the importance of wide stakeholder engagement in the Beijing+20 review process, including men, boys, youth and the media.

22. In providing an overview of the regional preparatory process for the Beijing+20 review for Asia and the Pacific, the Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP recalled resolution 2013/18 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which had mandated the regional commissions to undertake regional-level reviews and appraisals of progress in implementation of the Platform for Action. She presented to the Committee the Asia-Pacific road map for the 20-year review of progress in implementation of the Platform for Action, which had been endorsed by the Commission at its seventieth session. The Director further outlined the three tracks in the road map consisting of: intergovernmental consensus building; research and analysis; and stakeholder engagement. Under the intergovernmental track, the current session of the Committee served as the regional preparatory body for the "Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review", which would be convened by ESCAP at the ministerial level, in cooperation with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in Bangkok from 17 to 20 November 2014. The outcome of that Conference would serve as the Asian and Pacific regional input to the global Beijing+20 review.

(b) Consideration of the framework and elements of a draft outcome document for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review

23. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Elements of a draft outcome document for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review" (E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/WP.1/Rev.1).

24. The Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP provided the Committee with an overview of the structure and content of the draft outcome document. She informed the Committee that the content of the draft outcome document had been grounded in the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, particularly the 12 Critical Areas of Concern. The content of the draft outcome document had also been drawn from feedback provided by member States in response to the Asia-Pacific Beijing+20 regional survey conducted by the ESCAP secretariat, as well as Beijing+20 national review reports. The Committee noted that, to date, 38 ESCAP members and associate members had responded to the regional survey. Additionally, 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region had completed national review reports.

25. The Director of the Social Development Division further explained that the draft outcome document contained four sections as follows:

(a) Section I. Preamble;

(b) Section II. Renewing political commitment;

(c) Section III. Consolidating gains in the Asia-Pacific region;

(d) Section IV. Moving forward: measures to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the era beyond 2015.

26. The secretariat outlined the time frame for the review of the draft outcome document, which had been circulated to member States in July 2014. The current session of the Committee would undertake the first reading of the draft outcome document and provide suggestions for changes to reflect government positions. Thereafter, the secretariat would prepare the second version of the draft outcome document for online circulation to member States by mid-September 2014, after which member States would be requested to provide any further comments within 15 working days. On the basis of the feedback received, the secretariat would prepare a third version of the draft outcome document for issuance to member States by early October 2014 in advance of the final reading and anticipated adoption of the draft outcome document by the forthcoming "Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review".

27. The Regional Director of the Asia and Pacific Regional Office for UN-Women highlighted the significance of the 20-year review of the Platform for Action and stressed the need for political will and sufficient resources for the further implementation of the Platform for Action. She noted the repeated calls from the Asia-Pacific region for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment to be included in the proposed sustainable development goals currently under development through the General Assembly.

General comments

28. The Committee expressed appreciation for the efforts of the secretariat in preparing the draft outcome document. Some delegations provided general comments and suggestions on the draft outcome document, as indicated below.

(a) Russian Federation

The delegation noted that the Platform for Action remained relevant, addressing the main problems and questions in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment. The delegation noted that a key area of concern was women's equal access to employment and the ability of women to enjoy full family lives.

(b) Philippines

The delegation requested that all references to "women" in the draft outcome document be revised to "women and girls", as appropriate.

(c) India

The delegation reserved comment with reference to insertion of "women's human rights" after "gender equality" throughout the draft outcome document, until further direction could be obtained from its capital.

(d) Japan

The delegation indicated that proposals for change would be forthcoming following the outcome of a consultation with civil society, regarding priority actions for the further national implementation of the Platform for Action, especially in the areas of women and the economy and gender-responsive disaster risk reduction.

Preamble

29. The Committee considered section I, "Preamble", of the draft outcome document and made the following suggestions for change:

Paragraph 2:

(a) Australia

Suggested the addition of "and girls" after "and the empowerment of women".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the addition of ", the full realization of women's and girls' human rights and the empowerment of women and girls", after "gender equality".

(c) China

(i) Proposed replacing "*Recalling*" with "*Reaffirming*".

(ii) Stated that it would provide a textual recommendation using broader language at a subsequent reading of the draft outcome document, as the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women were more than solely matters of human rights.

Paragraph 3:

(a) Philippines

(i) Proposed inserting "substantive" between "for realizing" and "equality".

(ii) Suggested inserting, after "in Asia and the Pacific by ensuring", the phrase "the implementation of measures to address discrimination against women and girls in all its forms".

(b) India (supported by Pakistan)

Sought clarification on the implication of the use of the word "*Recalling*" in instances where member States were not party to the convention or optional protocol in question.

Paragraph 4:

(a) Philippines

(i) Proposed an addendum to line 3, inserting, after "the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action", "the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development".

(ii) Proposed inserting the word "gender" after "sex".

(b) China

Stated that the paragraph under consideration, as well as subsequent paragraphs, referred to several international instruments with different levels of authority and ratification and, accordingly, the delegation suggested that the paragraphs be revised by employing more general wording.

(c) Russian Federation

Requested clarification as to negotiated intergovernmental text where the term "gender" has been employed in relation to discrimination, while noting that "gender" is not stated in paragraph 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The secretariat informed the Committee that "gender" is used in paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 68/134, as follows: "to address and eliminate discrimination on the basis of age, gender or disability".

Paragraph 5:

(a) Pakistan

Noted that not all listed documents had been ratified by all member States and, as such, proposed that a note of that fact be made in paragraph 5.

(b) Philippines

Proposed the addition of "and International Labour Organization Convention 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers" after "the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families".

Paragraph 8:

(a) Australia

Proposed the addition of "and post-conflict settings", after "phases of conflict".

Paragraph 9:

(a) Islamic Republic of Iran

Proposed the deletion of "fully and effectively", as not all member States have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Paragraph 10:

(a) Australia

(i) Proposed the insertion of "may occur in and of itself, however," after "based on sex".

(ii) Proposed replacing "inextricably" with "often".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the insertion of "and gender" after "sex".

(c) Russian Federation

(i) Reiterated its request for clarification regarding the use of the term "gender" in intergovernmental texts adopted by consensus.

(ii) Proposed the insertion of the following paragraph, between paragraphs 12 and 13.

Paragraph 12 bis: "*Also reaffirming* the critical role of women in the family, a basic unit of society, and the consequent importance of women to promoting the well-being of both families and societies, and, as such, that maternity, motherhood, parenting and the role of women in procreation must not be a basis for discrimination or restrict the full participation of women in society,".

Paragraph 14:

(a) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "and rights" after "human dignity".

(b) Philippines

Requested clarification of the phrase "principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity", which was subsequently clarified by the secretariat.

(c) China

Requested clarification as to the kinds of practices being referred to by the phrase "oppression of women and girls", in order to facilitate translation.

30. No comments were made by delegations in relation to paragraphs 1, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15 and 16.

Renewing political commitment

31. The Committee considered section II, "Renewing political commitment", of the draft outcome document and made the following suggestions for change:

Paragraph 19:

(a) Philippines

Proposed the addition of "and violence and discrimination" after "structural root causes of gender inequality".

(b) Fiji

(i) Suggested the insertion of "create an enabling environment to" before "empower and".

(ii) Proposed the insertion of "in accordance with obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" after "economic and political life".

(c) China

Proposed the insertion of ", including" after "equality".

(d) Islamic Republic of Iran

Opposed the insertion of "in accordance with obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" after "economic and political life".

Paragraph 20:

(a) Fiji

Proposed replacing "promote" with "support".

32. No comments were made in relation to paragraphs 17 and 18.

Consolidating gains in the Asia-Pacific region

33. The Committee considered section III, "Consolidating gains in the Asia-Pacific region", of the draft outcome document and made the following suggestions for change:

Paragraph 23:

(a) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of "and remote" after "rural".

(b) Philippines

(i) Proposed the addition of "and geographically isolated and depressed" after "rural".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "and access to finance" after "assets".

Paragraph 24:

(a) Philippines

Proposed the addition of "and career tracking" after "training".

Paragraph 27:

(a) Fiji

Proposed the revision of paragraph 27 as follows:

We note with concern, however, that the overall incidence of maternal mortality in the region remains high, **that lack of access to skilled attendance and the incidence of unsafe abortion due to discriminatory laws and policies continue to contribute to a significant proportion of maternal deaths, particularly among adolescent girls,** and that significant differentials persist in maternal mortality ratios between low-income and high-income countries. We also note the need for greater progress in relation to ~~improving~~ **the respect, promotion, and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, including universal** access ~~of women~~ to sexual and reproductive health-care **information, education and services, including and** the removal of legal, structural, economic and social barriers, **including the repeal of laws that punish women and girls who have undergone illegal abortions**. We further note the need to halt the rise in new HIV infections **and prevalence of child, early and forced marriage** among women **and girls** in

the region by addressing the sociocultural, economic and legal factors that contribute to vulnerability to infection, to expand coverage of measures to treat HIV infection **with respect for confidentiality and informed consent** and to ensure universal coverage of health-care services are accessible to women and girls regardless of the origin of women and girls, their status or their disability.

(b) Philippines

(i) Proposed the addition of "particularly among adolescents" after "maternal mortality in the region remains high".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "information, education and services" after "health care".

(iii) Proposed the addition of "that" after "to ensure".

(iv) Proposed the addition of "country of" between "regardless of the" and "origin".

(c) Russian Federation

Opposed the inclusion of the phrase "sexual rights", due to the lack of an internationally agreed definition of "sexual rights" and the fact that "sexual rights" had not been previously included in any intergovernmental text adopted by consensus.

Paragraph 29:

(a) Philippines

Proposed the replacement of "female sex workers" with "sexually exploited women and girls".

(b) Islamic Republic of Iran (supported by the Russian Federation)

Proposed the deletion of the phrase "female sex workers".

(c) India

Sought clarification from the secretariat concerning the term "honour killings". The secretariat informed the Committee that the agreed language is "honour crimes" and "honour-related crimes", as used for example in General Assembly resolution 68/146.

(d) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "and beating and killing of women accused of sorcery" to the end of the paragraph.

(e) Russian Federation

Sought clarification from the secretariat as to the use of the term "transgender" in intergovernmental text adopted by consensus. The secretariat clarified that Commission resolution 67/9, adopted by consensus, included the term "transgender".

Paragraph 30:

(a) Australia

Proposed the insertion of "compared with men and boys" after "differential impact of conflict on women and girls".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the addition of "conflict resolution and peacebuilding" between "including" and "awareness-raising".

Paragraph 31:

(a) Australia

Proposed the addition of "and post-conflict settings" after "women and girls in times of conflict".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the addition of ", transition" after "positions in conflict".

Paragraph 32:

(a) Australia

Proposed the insertion of "or comparable" after "work of equal".

Paragraph 33:

(a) Russian Federation

Proposed the inclusion of an additional sentence at the end of paragraph 33, as follows: "In promoting women's economic empowerment, we recognize the need to strengthen efforts to achieve equal employment opportunities which enable women to realize their full potential and achieve their career and family aspirations."

(b) Philippines

(i) Proposed the addition of "domestic and" between "particularly" and "caregiving work".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "particularly in the informal economy" after "region".

Paragraph 34:

(a) Australia

(i) Proposed the deletion of "in" following "affirmative action measures" and the addition of "at the local level and" between "affirmative action measures" and "in the private sector".

(ii) Proposed replacing "quotas" with "targets".

Paragraph 37:

(a) Philippines

Proposed the inclusion of ", resources" between "awareness" and "and capacity".

(b) Fiji

(i) Proposed the replacement of the word "promote" with the word "generate".

(ii) Proposed the insertion of "raise" before "awareness".

(iii) Proposed the replacement of "and" with "develop" before "capacity".

(iv) Proposed the insertion of "and establish institutional mechanisms" between "capacity" and "to mainstream".

Paragraph 38:

(a) Azerbaijan

Proposed the addition of ", including internally displaced persons and refugee women" after "the legal literacy of women and girls".

Paragraph 39:

(a) Philippines (supported by Fiji)

(i) Proposed the addition of ", including their sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights" after "the rights of women and girls".

(ii) Proposed the insertion of "discrimination and" after "persistent".

(b) India

Proposed the insertion of "by those countries" after "strengthen national legislation".

(c) Islamic Republic of Iran

(i) Proposed the addition of "considering" before "universal ratification".

(ii) Proposed the deletion of "without reservations".

(d) Fiji

(i) Proposed the addition of "including their sexual and reproductive health and rights," after "of women and girls".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "discrimination and" after "law enforcement systems and persistent".

(iii) Proposed the addition of "and/" before "or strengthen national legislation".

(iv) Proposed the addition of "in accordance with the standards of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" after "strengthen national legislation".

(e) China

Proposed the deletion of "and its Optional Protocol without reservations"

Paragraph 41:

(a) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of a new paragraph, between paragraphs 41 and 42, as follows:

Paragraph 41bis: "We are also concerned that, despite advances made, the media continues to promote discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of women that are detrimental to the rights, interests and empowerment of women."

(b) China

Proposed the addition of "and know-how" after "to have less access".

Paragraph 42:

(a) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of "and slow onset" after "differential".

Paragraph 43:

(a) Philippines

Proposed the insertion of the phrase ", including for disaster-preparedness and responses to disaster situations" after "environmental policies and programmes".

(b) Fiji

(i) Proposed the addition of the following: after "natural resources", "and land. We are also concerned about the impact of the actions of extractive industries and multinational corporations on women's human rights to land and natural resources in the interest of security and export-led growth and development."

(ii) Proposed the insertion of the phrase "including for disaster preparedness and response to disaster situations" after "policies and programmes".

(c) Bhutan

(i) Proposed the insertion of "limited and" between "knowledge and skills of women are often" and "disregarded".

(ii) Proposed the addition of ", including climate change adaptation" after "policies and programmes".

Paragraph 45:

(a) Australia

Proposed the replacement of "domestic enslavement of girls and the commercial sexual exploitation of the girl child" with "the serious exploitation of the girl child, including for domestic work or sexual exploitation".

(b) Fiji

Proposed the addition of ", early" before "and forced marriage".

(c) Bhutan

Proposed the insertion of ", including trafficking and commercial sex exploitation" after "the girl child".

(d) Philippines

Proposed the addition of ", including cyberpornography" after "exploitation of the girl child".

34. No comments were made on paragraphs 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 35, 36, 40 and 44.

Moving forward: measures to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the era beyond 2015

35. The Committee considered section IV, "Moving forward: measures to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the era beyond 2015", of the draft outcome document and made the following suggestions for change:

Paragraph 46:

(a) China

Proposed that an additional paragraph be inserted, following paragraph 46, which would encourage the reinforcement and promotion of current good practices and actions by Governments in implementation of the Platform for Action.

(b) Philippines

Proposed that an additional paragraph be inserted, following paragraph 46a, addressing the issue of "legal and policy barriers" to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

(c) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of a new paragraph after paragraph 46(a) as follows:

Paragraph 46(a)bis: "To remove legal and policy barriers and take positive measures to change discriminatory social norms concerning women's decision-making and autonomy in all aspects of their lives, including, inter alia, health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, family life, finances, education and employment, and to ensure access of women and girls to justice and legal redress."

Paragraph 46(b):

(a) Philippines

(i) Proposed the addition of "or agency, as appropriate," after "central policy coordinating ministry".

(ii) Proposed the deletion of "such as the ministry of planning, social affairs or internal affairs" (supported by Bhutan).

(b) Pakistan

Proposed the insertion of ", or the institutions that deal with human rights" after "or internal affairs".

(c) China (supported by India and the Lao People's Democratic Republic)

Suggested that the paragraph be revised such that the text allows for flexibility at the national level.

(d) India (supported by the Lao People's Democratic Republic)

Proposed the addition of ", in accordance with their national circumstances" after "advancement of women".

(e) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "or the office of prime minister" after "or internal affairs".

Paragraph 46(c):

(a) India

Proposed the addition of "in accordance with national policies as appropriate," before "including establishing a minimum percentage".

(b) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "and all line ministries" after "advancement of women".

Paragraph 46(e):

(a) Russian Federation

Proposed the replacement of "all" with "relevant".

(b) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "by the establishment of accountability mechanisms and accountability measures for mainstreaming gender," after "Governments and parliaments,"

Paragraph 46(f):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the replacement of "equality" with "responsive".

Paragraph 46(g):

(a) Pakistan

Proposed the replacement of "the highest" with "all".

Paragraph 46(h):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the deletion of ", and" before "gender equality issues" and the insertion of ", and women's human rights and empowerment" before "among policymakers".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the revision of "to strengthen capacity and political will to address in a coordinated and cross-sectoral manner the root causes" to read "to strengthen political commitment and capacity to address in a coordinated and convergent manner across all sectors the root causes".

Paragraph 46(j):

(a) Australia (supported by India)

Suggested that the text be revised to allow for different mechanisms for financing initiatives that address the 12 Critical Areas of Concern of the Platform for Action, noting that there are multiple ways through which programmes addressing gender equality may be funded, such as gender mainstreaming and benchmarking.

(b) India

Proposed the addition of ", as appropriate," after "financial benchmarks".

Paragraph 46(k):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the addition of ", women's human rights" after "gender equality".

(b) Australia

Suggested that the paragraph be revised to allow for flexibility, at the national and local levels, in the means through which gender equality initiatives may be financed.

(c) Philippines (supported by Bhutan and the Russian Federation)

(i) Requested clarification as to the implication of the phrase "the arms trade and extractive industries". The secretariat informed the Committee that "arms trade" appears in the Platform for Action and provided a definition of "extractive industries".

(ii) Proposed the deletion of "the arms trade and extractive industries" so as not to limit sources of funding to those mentioned in paragraph 46(k) and to enable Governments to determine sources of funding as appropriate to national contexts.

(d) Palau

Expressed its support for the retention of "extractive industries".

(e) Russian Federation

Proposed beginning the paragraph with "To enhance efforts".

(f) Bhutan

Proposed beginning the paragraph with "To explore".

Paragraph 46(l):

(a) Philippines

Proposed the insertion of "planning and" before "budgeting".

(b) Australia

Requested a reformulation of the text of the paragraph to allow for greater flexibility at the national level in relation to gender-responsive budgeting.

Paragraph 46(m):

(a) Bhutan

Suggested the insertion of a paragraph 46(m)bis, which would reference exploring or considering the provision of incentives to private sector enterprises that promote the participation of women.

(b) Australia

Proposed the insertion of "and/or programmes" after "mechanisms".

Paragraph 46(n):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the addition of ", women's human rights" after "gender equality".

(b) Philippines

Proposed the deletion of "systems," after "To develop and strengthen".

(c) Bhutan

Proposed the addition of "and reviews" after "gender audits".

(d) Australia (supported by India)

Requested that the paragraph be revised to reflect the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of gender programming, in addition to tracking the results of financial allocations and expenditure for gender equality.

(e) India

Opposed inclusion of "women's human rights" in relation to the issue of "financial tracking mechanisms".

Paragraph 46(o):

(a) Pakistan

Proposed the insertion of the phrase "with regard to gender" after "national policymaking, planning and public expenditure".

(b) India

Proposed that the phrase "the global development agenda beyond 2015" be revised to reflect the fact that a development agenda beyond 2015 had not yet been adopted by the General Assembly.

Paragraph 46(r):

(a) Fiji

(i) Proposed the insertion of "rights" between "women's" and "organizations".

(ii) Proposed the addition of ", women's human rights" after "gender equality".

(b) Philippines

(i) Proposed the replacement of "particularly" with "including".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "and feminist groups" after "women's organizations", noting that paragraph 26 of the Platform for Action makes reference to "feminist groups".

(iii) Proposed replacing "including" with "for".

(iv) Proposed the retention of "at all levels", noting that women's participation in decision-making bodies should not be confined to the national and local levels.

(c) Islamic Republic of Iran (supported by the Russian Federation)

Opposed the insertion of "and feminist groups" into the paragraph.

(d) Russian Federation

Proposed the addition of "national" before "decision-making bodies".

(e) Bhutan

Proposed the deletion of "at all levels and in all sectors".

(f) China

(i) Expressed preference for "women's organizations", as opposed to "women's rights organizations".

(ii) Proposed the addition of "national and local" before "decision-making bodies".

Paragraph 46(t):

(a) India

Proposed the addition of "if required," after "official statistics,"

(b) Fiji

Proposed the addition of "women's human rights" after "gender equality".

(c) China

Proposed the addition of "at the request of national Governments" after "development agencies".

Paragraph 46(w):

(a) China

Requested clarification as to whether "inclusive and mutually accountable partnerships" had been used in intergovernmental documents adopted by consensus.

Paragraph 46(x):

(a) Fiji

(i) Proposed the insertion of "rights" between "women's" and "organizations".

(ii) Proposed the addition of the phrase "by ensuring an enabling environment for their participation at local, national, regional and global levels" after "gender equality results".

(b) China

Proposed the replacement of "maximize" with "enhance" or "promote".

Paragraph 46(y):

(a) Philippines

Proposed the addition of "responsibility, transparency and" after "promote"

(b) Pakistan

Sought clarification as to the necessity of having a separate paragraph on the private sector and public-private partnerships.

Paragraph 46(aa):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of "North-South, South-South and" before "triangular cooperation".

Paragraph 47(d):

(a) Fiji

Proposed the insertion of "North-South," before "South-South" and the insertion of "triangular" before "cooperation".

Paragraph 47(h):

(a) Russian Federation

Proposed the replacement of "consideration and endorsement" with "its consideration".

36. No comments were made on paragraphs 46(a), 46(d), 46(i), 46(p), 46(q), 46(s), 46(u), 46(v), 46(z), 47, 47(a), 47(b), 47(c), 47(e), 47(f) and 47(g).

Consolidated civil society statement on agenda item 3(b)

37. The consolidated civil society statements, delivered under agenda item 3(b), noted that women are not only mothers, but they also have multiple and intersecting identities and suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action rightfully recognized that "various forms of the family exist", which should be reflected in efforts to accelerate implementation of the Platform for Action.

38. In their statements, the civil society representatives further stressed that accountability must be rooted in human rights principles and be based on the principle of universal access. They welcomed the reaffirmation of countries to implementation of the Platform for Action. The representatives of civil society further underlined the importance of international solidarity, financial support, progressive taxation and global tax revenues and accountability mechanisms to promote strengthened implementation. The representatives of civil society suggested that an accountability mechanism be established with targeted benchmarks to monitor implementation of the Platform for Action.

39. The civil society representatives further emphasized that equality, development, social justice, peace and human rights were mutually reinforcing, cross-cutting and served as the guiding principles to ensure a just distribution of the benefits of development and economic growth. In particular, the civil society representatives emphasized that human rights and women's empowerment were intrinsically linked. It was further stressed that law and policy measures should be put into place to ensure enforcement and accountability mechanisms towards that end.

40. A representative of civil society further stressed, with regard to the Beijing+20 review process, the importance of constructive engagement between member States and civil society organizations in regional and international processes. The civil society representative urged member States and the secretariat to facilitate fruitful and productive engagement.

C. Consideration of the programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017

41. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017" (E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/3) for its consideration.

42. The Committee endorsed the programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017, as contained in the above-mentioned document, inclusive of support for the following outputs: publications on (a) realizing the potential of youth: linkages between the dynamics of youth exclusion and sustainable development in the region; (b) the economic implications of population ageing in Asia and the Pacific and harnessing the second demographic dividend; (c) women's transformative leadership in Asia and the Pacific by exploring the nature and role of women's transformative leadership and its contribution to achievement of gender equality and inclusive and sustainable development; and (d) making room for all: improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

43. The Committee endorsed the following major intergovernmental reviews proposed for the biennium 2016-2017: (a) midterm review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities; (b) the Asian and Pacific intergovernmental conference on strengthening youth participation and inclusive policies; and (c) the third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific.

44. The Committee emphasized the importance of mainstreaming gender throughout all components of the programme of work of the secretariat. In response to a query on how that was being undertaken, the secretariat informed the Committee that the Executive Secretary, within one month of assumption of her duties at ESCAP in early 2014, had issued a gender equality policy for the secretariat. Under that policy, programme managers were directed to, inter alia, mainstream gender dimensions into programme planning, budgeting and human resources management processes within the secretariat. Under that policy a "gender architecture" had also been established to promote the mainstreaming of gender throughout all substantive areas of work, as well as in the operations of the secretariat.

45. One delegation highlighted the contribution of the informal economy to economic growth, as well as the role of care work and sought clarification on whether that would be reflected in the programme of work. The secretariat noted that women's economic empowerment was an important component of its work on gender equality, and that the Commission could address such issues in its research on creating an enabling environment for women's entrepreneurship in the context of integration in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

46. The representative of civil society emphasized the importance of addressing disability in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015. In particular, the secretariat was commended for having addressed the issue of accessibility and the empowerment of persons with disabilities in its programme of work. The secretariat was encouraged to continue supporting the

empowerment of women with disabilities in its programme of work. Governments were encouraged to adopt a development justice approach to ensure that their policies and programmes had a positive impact on women with disabilities.

D. Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-first session

47. No draft resolutions were proposed by the Committee for consideration.

E. Other matters

48. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Dates for the fourth session of the Committee on Social Development" (E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/4).

49. The Committee decided that its fourth session would be held in the last quarter of 2016.

F. Adoption of the report of the Committee

50. The Committee adopted the present report on 20 August 2014 for submission to the Commission for endorsement at its seventy-first session,

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

51. The third session of the Committee on Social Development was convened in Bangkok from 18 to 20 August 2014.

52. Opening statements were delivered by H.E. Mr. Vichien Chavalit, Acting Minster of Social Development and Human Security, Government of Thailand, and by the representative of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

53. A statement was also delivered by Ms. Virisila Buadromo on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Beijing+20 Civil Society Steering Committee.

B. Attendance

54. The Committee session was attended by representatives of the following members of ESCAP: Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Pakistan; Palau; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Tuvalu; and Viet Nam.

55. The Committee session was attended by the following ESCAP associate member: Macao, China.

56. The Committee session was attended by representatives of the following United Nations bodies: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

57. The Committee session was attended by the following specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations: International Labour Organization; International Telecommunication Union; World Bank; and World Health Organization.

58. The Committee session was attended by the following intergovernmental organizations: International Organization for Migration; and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

59. The following non-governmental organizations attended the Committee session: Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development; Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development; Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women; Asia Pacific Women Watch; Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era; Foundation for Women; Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women; International Planned Parenthood Federation East and South East Asia and Oceania Region; International Planned Parenthood Federation South Asia Region; International Women's Health Coalition; International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific; Isis International; National Alliance of Women's Organizations; Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management; and Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights.

60. Other entities for which representatives attended the Committee session were as follows: Asia-Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights; Asia Pacific Women with Disabilities United; FemlinkPacific; Fiji Women's Rights Movement; Indraprastha Public Affairs Center; Innovative Solutions Inc.; and Women's Alliance of Communities in Transition – South Asia.

61. In addition, the Committee session was attended by: a representative of the Asia-Pacific Regional Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security; and by an advocate for human rights and gender equality.

C. Election of officers

62. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair:	Honourable Ms. Baklai Temengil (Palau)
Vice-Chair:	Ms. Emmeline Verzosa (Philippines)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Tariq Ul-Islam (Bangladesh)

D. Agenda

63. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
   (a) Opening statements;
   (b) Election of officers;
   (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Review of social development trends and challenges in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015.

3. Consideration of a thematic focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women:

   (a) Review of regional preparations for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review (Bangkok, 17-20 November 2014);

   (b) Consideration of the framework and elements of a draft outcome document for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review.

4. Consideration of the programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017.

5. Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-first session.

6. Other matters.

7. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

8. Closing of the session.

E. Side event

64. A side event on addressing inequalities in Asia and the Pacific was organized by the secretariat on 18 August 2014, with the participation of the following panellists: Mr. Rathin Roy, Director-General, National Institute of Finance and Public Policy, India; Mr. Bart Édes, Director, Poverty Reduction, Gender, and Social Development Division, Asian Development Bank; and Ms. Wenyan Yang, Chief, Social Perspectives on Development Branch, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York. The side event was moderated by Ms. Thin Lei Win, Correspondent for the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Annex

List of documents

Document symbol	Document title	Agenda item
General series		
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/1	Confronting rising inequalities in Asia and the Pacific: trends and opportunities in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015	2
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/2	Asia-Pacific road map for the 20-year review of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/3	Programmatic focus and planned outputs in the field of social development for the biennium 2016-2017	4
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/4	Dates for the fourth session of the Committee on Social Development	6
Limited series		
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/L.1/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1(c)
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/L.2	Draft report	7
Working paper		
E/ESCAP/CSD(3)/WP.1/Rev.1	Elements of a draft outcome document for the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review	3(b)